1970s 2d6
RETRO RULES

ZOZER

1970s 2d6 RETRO RULES
[For Cepheus Engine]

by Paul Elliott
zozer@talktalk.net

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STANDARDS & ASSUMPTIONS

Zozer Games' soon-to-be-released book **HOSTILE** is a science-fiction setting that harkens back to the early 80s and late 70s, and so it seems fitting to offer the referee and players a set of roleplaying rules which do the same. Whilst Cepheus Engine is a sophisticated rules-set that seems able to cope with almost every eventuality, the rules for task resolution and combat that follow are directly inspired by the very first set of 2D6 SF roleplaying rules from 1977. They allow for much faster play, but at the cost of less detail. Use them as an option. Unless specified here, use the weapon stats from Cepheus Engine.

http://www.paulelliottbooks.com/hostile.html

TASK CHECKS

The effects of characteristics have no influence on the bearing of skill checks. The 1970s rules use either skill checks (where a skill is required) or characteristic checks (where a characteristic is required). We can theorise that characteristics did play a part in how easily or quickly the character learnt his skill, but his skill today (say in Gun Combat) stands at 1 or 2 or whatever, and represents a combination of many factors, not just training.

Skill Checks

Skill checks are almost identical to those made in Cepheus Engine. Roll 8+ for success, add in a relevant skill as a positive DM and apply a penalty based on the difficulty of the task. The standard difficulty levels are Routine (+2), Average (0), Difficult (-2), Very Difficult (-4) and Formidable (-6). Rolls should never be made for easy tasks that give a modifier of +3 or higher, assume an automatic success and save some time. The use of Effects from Cepheus Engine can be implemented if desired, but only where that would be useful.
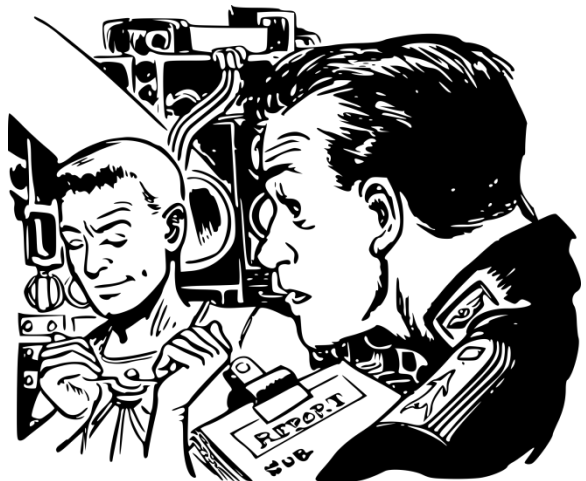
Characteristic Checks

With such an abbreviated skill list as we find in settings like **HOSTILE**, there will be times when no skill suggests itself for the resolution of a problem. The players may come up with a solution, or the referee may instead ask for a suitable characteristic check, such as using Int to notice a tampered lock, or Soc to get a meeting with the marshal's office, or Edu to recognise a certain chemical is a lethal poison, etc. Roll

10+ for success, and add ½ of the relevant characteristic as a DM, Always round down, as this allows even characters with a 15 in the relevant characteristic to fail a roll. Resist the temptation to throw in penalties for difficulty since this will soon mean that many characters are being denied any chance of success at all, even the remotest chance.

COMBAT RESOLUTION

The biggest change comes with combat resolution, and particularly with the abandonment of an initiative mechanic. This sophisticated, fair and realistic system from Cepheus Engine which determines who acts when, slows combat down significantly. The 1970s rules option replaces it with simultaneous actions, something that is super-fast to play out, although it does need a fair and careful hand from the referee. But first we need to determine who has the initiative at the start of any conflict, and for that we must look at Surprise.

Surprise

Often it will be obvious at the start of a conflict who is aware of who, at other times the dice must decide. Each side in the conflict rolls 1D6 to determine who has the element of surprise. The winner must have **rolled 3 higher** than their opponent. Obviously, using this system, sometimes no-one will gain surprise (both sides are aware of one another and the normal combat procedure may progress). When a group (either the player characters or the referee's NPCs or wild animals) have surprise they can either:

1) Avoid any contact and let the NPCs go on their way, or

2) Attack with impunity (an ambush), until the ambushed group realize they are being attacked, at which point the standard combat procedure needs to be followed. Silenced shots and attacking in a vacuum will all help in retaining the element of surprise, but one of the ambushed group is likely to see his comrade drop – this occurs on a 2D6 roll of 7+. Should this happen, all of the attackers still get their shot or blow, since we are using simultaneous combat (see below). The advantage of having surprise, of course, is that the opponent cannot fight back and if engaged in melee, cannot parry.

Served in a military career	+1
Leader or Tactics skill	+1
Recon skill	+1
In a vehicle	-1
PCs/NPCs number 8+	-1
Animal life numbering 10+	-1
Animal is a Pouncer	+1

Range

2D6	Encounter Range
1	Melee (3m or less)
2	Short (3-12m)
3	Melee (3m or less)
4	Medium (13-50m)
5	Short (3-12m)
6	Short (3-12m)
7	Medium (13-50m)
8	Long (51-250m)
9	Medium (13-50m)
10	Very Long (251-500m)
11	Long(51-250m)
12	Very Long (251-500m)
13	Very Long (251-500m)

At what range does the encounter take place? Often this is evident from the situation at band, but if random determination is required, then use the following 1970s system. Roll 2D6 on the encounter range table, to the left, adding in the relevant terrain DM.

Terrain Type	DM
Interior, Ship, Building	-5
City	-4
Underwater	-1
Swamp, Marsh	-1
Jungle, Forest	-
Sea Surface	+2
Hills, Rough Land	+2
Arctic	+2
Mountains, Plains	+3
Open	+3
Desert	+4

Movement and Time

Characters and most ground-dwelling animals move at Speed 1 (6m) per round. Most can increase their speed to a run, and for all humans and many animals this will be Speed 2 (12m) per round. Some fast creatures run at Speed 3 (18m) per round, see Cepheus Engine rules on animal encounters for more detail on this. We measure time just as in Cepheus Engine, in 6-second combat rounds.

Simultaneous Combat

Few roleplaying game systems today employ simultaneous combat, but it is a fast and effective way of adjudicating who acts when. Actually, we call it simultaneous combat, but it is in fact a two-tier system. Melee combat is resolved first, followed by all firearms and ranged combat, the reason for this will become clear later. All those PCs who wish to attempt melee combat should do so, followed by any NPCs or animals that wish to do so. All of the dice results and wounds are determined and then described by the referee. After this, any PC who wishes to engage in ranged or firearms combat should do so, followed by any NPC. All of the dice results and wounds are determined and then described by the referee. The players may find that two characters shoot one another, or stab one another, and the referee should let this stand, it happens enough in the real world to cause us little concern.

Melee attacks are resolved first to give them an edge. Should a guard with a shotgun walk around a corner straight into a character who is trying to disable a lock, that guard has a choice. Does he raise his gun and try to shoot the character, waiting until after the melee phase? Or does he participate in the melee phase and use his gun as a club? If he were an infantryman, he might even have a bayonet on his rifle with which he could make effective melee attacks. If he waits to shoot, however, he gives the burglar a free melee attack which may result in him being injured and suffer a penalty, or even disarmed.

MELEE COMBAT

Roll 8+ to hit a target in melee combat. Use the following DMs:

Str 9+	+1
Str 5-	-1
Unskilled	-3
Attacker's Blade Cbt skill	+ level
Defender's Blade Cbt skill	- level
Weakened Blow	-1
Drawing weapon same round	-3

Weakened Blows

A character is able to make a number of melee attacks equal to End without becoming fatigued. After that point, all subsequent melee attacks are made as Weakened Blows with a -1 to hit. Wounds to Endurance suffered during the melee do not alter this value, although wounds suffered before the encounter certainly do. After the fight is over, a few minutes out of combat will remove the Weakened Blows modifier.

Parrying

A victim being attacked in melee by someone with a weapon can automatically try to parry those attacks. This is represented in the 70s Retro Rules by applying the victim's Blade Combat skill as a penalty DM to the attacker's chance to hit. If the attacker is using his bare hands in a brawling attack, then the defender can apply his Brawling skill as a penalty DM to the attacker's chance to hit.

Grappling

An unarmed brawling attack can be used to either inflict 1D damage to the victim, or it can be used to grab the victim for some other effect (the player decides before the dice are thrown). Decide whether to:

Throw the Victim	Inflicts 1 point of damage, plus ½ the attacker's Str (rd down)
Drag the Victim	Drag up to ½ the attacker's Str (rd down) in one combat round
Disarm the Victim	Force him to drop his weapon; if the attacker makes a Str roll he gets to take the weapon for himself.
Hold the Victim	Hold him immobile; until the grappler's attention is diverted, at which point he can attempt to break-away with a Str roll.

GUN COMBAT

Roll 8+ to hit a target in ranged combat. Use the following DMs:

Dex 9+			+1
Dex 5-			-1
Unskilled			-3
Attacker's Gun Cbt skill			+ level
Over Optimum Range			-2
Over Twice the Optimum Range			-4
Close Range (Under 3 meters)			+2
Target Dodging (Under 50m)			-2
(Over 50m)			-4
In Partial Hard Cover			-2
Autofire 4 rd burst			X2
Autofire 10 rd burst			X3
Shotgun (full length)	within 20m	4D6	+1
	within 40m	2D6	+1
	over 40m	1D6	-2
Shotgun (sawn-off)	within 10m	4D6	+1
	within 20m	2D6	-
	over 20m	1D6	-2
Drawing/Unslinging gun same round			-3

Guns and Range

Weapon ranges are kept simple in the 1970s Retro Rules. Every gun has an Optimum Range and this range is used on the DM table to establish hit probabilities. The table here gives the Optimum Ranges of most common firearms.

Shotguns

Shotguns often fire shot that spreads as it leaves the barrel, increasing the chance to hit. Also, as the shot disperses, the potential damage of that attack reduces. Because of this a shotgun gains a +1 at half Optimum range and does 4D6 damage. Within Optimum range it does 2D6 damage and it inflicts 1D6 over Optimum range. Shortened or sawn-off shotguns have commensurately shorter ranges. The damage for shotguns as well as all of the factored range DMs are included in a special section on the table of to hit Die Modifiers (above).

Firearm	Optimum Range
Revolver	15m
Auto Pistol	15m
Body Pistol	8m
Snub Pistol	8m
Shotgun	40m
Shotgun (sawn off)	20m
Rifle	200m
Carbine	150m
Auto Rifle	200m
Assault Rifle	150m
Accelerator Rifle	100m
Advanced Combat Rifle	150m
Gauss Rifle	250m
SMG	50m
Laser Pistol	15m
Laser Carbine	150m
Laser Rifle	250m

Autofire

A typical 4 round burst of gunfire grants TWO attack rolls on the target at the normal skill chance. In addition, the gunman gets that same number of attacks on any *non-dodging* adjacent targets (this time with a DM of -3). Some autofire weapons are capable of 10 round bursts – they get 3 attacks and get to attack 3 adjacent targets.

AutoFire Level	No. of Attacks On the Target (DM +0)	Adjacent Targets Coming Under Fire (DM -3)
Single Shot	1 Attack	None
4rd burst	2 Attacks	2 Adjacent Targets
10 rd burst	3 Attacks	3 Adjacent Targets

This ability to hit or threaten adjacent targets simulates both collateral damage as well as suppressive fire – since the target will most likely (should, most likely!) react by dodging to avoid the chance of being hit by adjacent autofire hits.

THROWING WEAPONS

To throw a dagger, grenade or anything else, **roll 8+** and use the following DMs:

Dex 9+	+1
Dex 5-	-1
Attacker's Blade Cbt skill (if throwing a blade weapon)	+ level
Weakened Blow	-1

Throwing Grenades

Most daggers, spears, javelins etc. can be thrown out to 15m. Grenades thrown in tense situations can reach 10 meters, plus twice the thrower's Str.

WOUNDING AND DEATH

Damage and wounding in the 70's Retro Rules are broadly similar to those in the Cepheus Engine. Follow these steps:

1) Subtract any Armour points from the attack damage
2) Reduce Endurance by the amount left
3) When End is 0, the victim is Wounded
4) If more damage is suffered, reduce Str or Dex appropriately (player's choice)
5) When a second characteristic is reduced to 0, the victim is Seriously Wounded and knocked unconscious for 2D6 minutes.
6) If all three characteristics are reduced to 0, the character is Dead

How Badly Injured Are You?

Guidelines for interpreting the different wound states follow.

Wound Type	Effect
Minor Injury	Cut or bruised, but unaffected
Wounded	Still fighting, but wounded, reduce movement rate to 3m per round (half speed).
Seriously Wounded	Knocked out for 2D6 minutes and suffering bleeding or other trauma. It doesn't look good.
Dead	Dead is dead. Unless you are an android…

Medical Attention

More serious wounds require more complex treatment.

Wound Type	Attention Required
Minor Injury Wounded	Gain 1 point of End per hour of rest. Routine (+2) Medical roll will add +2 points for that injury only. DM: -2 if no first aid kit available.
Seriously Wounded	Knocked out for 2D6 minutes, when awakens all characteristics at 0 are set to 1. Victim will deteriorate, suffering 1D6 damage every hour unless medic makes an Average (0) Medical roll. DMs: 0 if using advanced trauma kit, -2 if using a first aid kit, -4 if no medical tools available. Make this roll every hour until successful, or the victim dies. If successful, character begins to regain 1 characteristic point per day, or zero per day if not resting.

VEHICLES

There are three general classes of vehicle: **Softskin**, **Light Armour** and **Heavy Armour**. Whilst heavy armor is primarily used on main battle tanks, light armor is employed on APCs and other quasi-military vehicles.

Roll to hit a vehicle on 8+; use the Gun Combat DM's.

Heavy Weapons Fire

If firing a heavy weapon, such as a heavy machine gun, starship weapon, anti-tank rocket or missile, heavy laser or tank gun, then replace Gun Combat skill with Heavy Weapons skill.

Roll 2D6 to determine damage:

2D6	Effect	
1-7	No effect	No effect
8-9	Minor Damage	The vehicle may be disabled and unable to move, or have its armament disabled.
10-12	Destroyed	The vehice explodes. Everyone makes a Dex roll. All occupants suffer 1-6D6 damage.

Use the following DMs:

Autocannon/Heavy Machine-gun/ Smallarms (see ruling below)	-4
Heavy Armour	0
Light Armour	+2
Softskin	+4
Vehicle Tech Levels	difference applied, in favour of highest TL

Small Arms Fire

This includes most hand weapons, machineguns, grenades, shorguns, anti-personnel mines, rifles, etc. Roll to hit the vehicle as normal. When a cumulative damage total is reached during the combat (including small arms fire from any other characters participating in the battle) then the player gets to make a single roll on the damage table (above). The Cumulative Damage Scores are:

- Softskin   20 points
- Light Armour   50 points
- Heavy Armour   80 points

After each the battle, or after a roll is made on the damage table, the vehicle's total is re-set to zero.

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